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ARTICLES:

- (1) Countries concerned have different motives regarding concept of East Asian Community

The concept of an East Asian Community - proposed by the Hatoyama administration - will be placed high on the agenda for the upcoming summit meeting on Oct. 10 between Japan, China, and South Korea. But the details of the concept have yet to be revealed, so the countries concerned, such as the U.S., China, South Korea, and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) nations, remain unable to determine how to respond to it.

Japan has yet to consider framework, aim

In a speech at the UN General Assembly on Sept. 24, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama declared that Japan will make utmost efforts to become a "bridge" for the world. As part of these efforts, he advocated building an East Asian Community. This concept is based on his political philosophy, "fraternity" (yuai).

Hatoyama has long cherished the idea of an East Asian community. In the introduction of his book titled "A new constitution draft," published in 2005, he noted: "I would like to propose that Japan formulate a plan for a European Union (EU)-style East Asian community and play the leading role in promoting it." Australian politician Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who made efforts to establish the European Community, initially proposed the spirit of fraternity. Hatoyama seems to be linking "fraternity" to "community."

Then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi stressed in 2002 that "we should aim to build a community in which we walk together and move

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forward together." Successive cabinets also made efforts, through meetings of ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations) and East Asian summit meetings, to push ahead with cooperation in economic, disasters and other areas, with an eye toward an East Asian Community. Hatoyama's position of placing priority on Asia is more prominent than his predecessors', but the framework and aim of the idea have yet to be discussed within the government.

Moreover, Hatoyama and Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada have different images in mind for the community. On the question of whether the U.S. should be included in the envisioned community, Hatoyama said: "I have no intention of excluding the U.S.," while Okada commented: "The current scheme does not include the U.S."

Hatoyama cites "currency" as an area in which cooperation is possible in East Asia, but Okada takes a negative view, remarking: "Introducing a common currency will restrict sovereignty to a considerable extent. There are socialist countries and also democratic countries [in the region]. It is inconceivable for all the countries to share a single currency. "

China has sense of alarm; South Korea has feeling of familiarity; ASEAN waiting to ascertain intention

"I support the idea of forming an East Asian community under the lead of ASEAN," Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said in a press conference held after a meeting of ASEAN plus three in Laos in November 2004. He aimed to give ASEAN countries, over which China finds it easy to exert influence, the leadership role in talks on the community concept. When the Koizumi administration proposed an East Asian community, China was alarmed that Japan and the U.S. might have begun to move to exclude China's influence from the region. That is because the Koizumi initiative proposed not only economic integration but also security cooperation with the U.S. and Australia. For China, which is controlled by the Communist Party, the idea of integrating Asia would mean forming a free trade zone. China is not considering integration in the political and security areas.

Meanwhile, South Korea has shown a feeling of familiarity with the concept of community. The late former President Kim Dae Jung strongly advocated the concept of an East Asian community, and the nation also proposed setting up a study group on the concept at the summit meeting of ASEAN, Japan, China, and South Korea in 2000.

President Lee Myung-Bak has put forward a new concept that would include Central Asia and Oceania in the envisioned community.

ASEAN countries are looking at the concept with mixed feelings. A Foreign Ministry official of Thailand, the chair of ASEAN, grumbled: "Although Mr. Hatoyama has said he places priority to Asia, he has yet to meet the prime minister of the ASEAN chair country."

As pointed out by Thitinan Pongsudhirak, director of the Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University, ASEAN countries take the view that Japan has overly depended on the U.S. and that its role in the region is always vague. While welcoming the Hatoyama concept, they are taking a wait-and-see attitude to ascertain the real intention and specifics of the concept.

U.S. shifts attention to Japan-U.S. alliance

Hatoyama's proposed concept of an East Asian Community was initially

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received negatively in the U.S. An article by Hatoyama that was carried in the New York Times (online) took up this concept in the context of criticizing the U.S.-led world economic structure and calling for economic and security systems centered on Asia. Given this, some Americans felt the concept was unrealistic and as symbolized the Hatoyama administration's stance of distancing itself from the U.S.

The timing [for the release of Hatoyama's community concept] was also bad. The administration of President Barack Obama has placed importance on relations with Asia, as shown by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Japan as the first destination of her overseas trip in her new post. Declaring in Thailand in July: "By taking action, we will demonstrate that the U.S. has returned," Clinton signed ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), a pact that Washington was reluctant to sign under the previous Bush administration. The U.S. also launched a strategy dialogue with China and India for their senior officials to regularly hold talks.

The community concept emerged at a time when the U.S. began to pay attention to Asia. Since Prime Minister Hatoyama did not take it up when he met with President Obama in September, the sense of alarm has been assuaged for now. The focus of discussion has now shifted to bilateral issues, such as the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, including whether to halt the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean and whether to revise the agreed relocation plan of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station.

(2) Gov't to play it by ear in talks with U.S. over Futenma relocation

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)
October 9, 2009

Two days ago, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama implied that he would accept the currently planned relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, to a coastal area of Camp Schwab in the island prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago. Yesterday, Hatoyama was asked what he meant. "I'd like to explore a 'landing point' among various options," he replied. Hatoyama made it clear that his government would take a flexible stance in the run-up to full-fledged negotiations with the United States over the Futenma relocation issue. Meanwhile, the Social Democratic Party, one of the DPJ's two coalition partners, urged the foreign and defense ministers to move Futenma airfield out of Okinawa or Japan. His Futenma remarks had repercussions yesterday.

"While giving consideration to the feelings of Okinawa's people, we will arrive at an answer through negotiations with the United States," he told reporters in his office yesterday, by way of explaining the remarks he made on Oct. 7. "I didn't mean I would accept an agreement that was reached under my predecessor's administration." He added, "We're looking into various possibilities." He also stressed, "I have no doubt that an intergovernmental agreement carries weight."

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Campbell will come to Japan on Oct. 11, and Parliamentary Defense Secretary Akihisa Nagashima will visit the United States next week. On Oct. 20, U.S. Secretary of Defense Gates is scheduled to arrive in Japan. On Nov. 12, U.S. President Obama will make his first visit to Japan. Ahead of his

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visit, Japan and the United States will hold consultations on bilateral issues, including the Futenma issue.

In the run-up to this summer's election for the House of Representatives, Hatoyama insisted on the DPJ's advocacy of relocating the heliport functions of Futenma airfield outside Okinawa Prefecture. This was specified in the DPJ's "Okinawa Vision" paper released in 2008. However, the DPJ's manifesto did not directly touch on the Futenma issue. State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Koichi Takemasa, meeting the press yesterday, stressed, "The manifesto is our party's policy course and is the newest one." However, Hatoyama is now, in fact, fettered by his comments during the election campaign.

The U.S. government's basic position is that it will not consent to any changes to the current Futenma relocation plan. Therefore, the Hatoyama government is exploring tactics to get the U.S. government's understanding while positioning the Futenma issue in the overall picture of Japan-U.S. bilateral relations, including the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean and Japan's assistance to Afghanistan. Washington may see Hatoyama as adhering to a policy of relocating the Futenma facility outside Okinawa Prefecture without offering a specific solution. If that is the case, intergovernmental negotiations may hit a snag from the start. Hatoyama is believed to have judged that he had to send a message to the United States through his remarks of two days ago.

The Hatoyama government, however, has yet to determine its policy course on the question of relocating Futenma airfield within Okinawa Prefecture or moving it out of the prefecture. Meanwhile, government offices are required to resubmit their budget requests for next fiscal year no later than Oct. 15. The focus is on whether the Defense Ministry will earmark estimates in its budget request for the Futenma relocation. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano, when he met the press yesterday, was asked if the government would put off its decision on this matter. "That's also conceivable," Hirano said, implying the possibility of forgoing a decision on Oct. 15.

(3) Controversial remarks on Futenma, Hatoyama wavering between U.S. and SDP, desperate to prevent the comments from creating stir

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
October 9, 2009

Tetsuya Furuya

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama was preoccupied yesterday with explanations of his controversial remarks on Oct. 7 concerning relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (Ginowan City in Okinawa Prefecture) that were taken as suggesting his readiness to accept a contentious Japan-U.S. agreement reached during the previous government led by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). In his explanations, Hatoyama appears to have become distressed, being caught between the U.S. government, which has sought the relocation of the base to a place elsewhere in Okinawa as agreed, and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), one of his party's coalition partners, which has called for relocating the facility out of Okinawa.

Hatoyama said to the press corps yesterday evening regarding his comments on Oct. 7, "I did not mean that I would completely accept

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the agreement reached between the former Japanese and U.S. governments." He also said, "It is true that the accord the former

government concluded carries weight because it was an agreement between the two countries."

The previous government agreed on a plan to relocate Futenma Air Station to the coastal area of Camp Schwab, a U.S. military base. Hatoyama's comments did not mean that he would accept the bilateral agreement as is and left open the possibility he would accept a slight revision of the current plan by moving the airfield further out to sea or by relocating the base outside the prefecture.

When his Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was an opposition party, Hatoyama took a position of aiming at moving the base outside the prefecture. Since taking office, he has asserted that he has no intention of changing his view on the base. Against the backdrop of Hatoyama's altering his position is the U.S.'s strong stance. Japan-U.S. talks between diplomats and defense officials at the director general level were held in Washington this week. A senior Defense Ministry official who had received a report [on the talks] said to those around him, "(The U.S. side is) tough. [They are] very tough."

U.S. President Barack Obama will visit Japan on Nov. 12. The Japanese government has predicted that aid to Afghanistan will be a major agenda item at the summit meeting between Hatoyama and Obama. There is a possibility that Obama will ask Hatoyama about the true intention of his controversial remarks.

Meanwhile, with regard to a coalition agreement reached by the DPJ, the SDP, and the People's New Party (PNP), in which the DPJ pledged to "move in the direction of reexamining" the realignment of U.S. military bases in Japan, Hatoyama stressed on the 8th, "Naturally I cannot ignore it." For the SDP, however, the direction of the reexamining" means relocating the base out of Okinawa.

In reaction to Hatoyama's controversial remarks, the SDP, many of whose legislators hail from Okinawa, yesterday requested Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano cancel the current plan. SDP Secretary General Yasumasa Shigeno and other officials called on Hirano at the Prime Minister's Official Residence [Kantei]. If Hatoyama seeks a conclusion that will play down the significance of the coalition agreement, it will drive a wedge between coalition partners.

(4) Editorial: North Korea's nuclear programs; Six-Party Talks are indispensable

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 5) (Full)
October 7, 2009

Pyongyang has suggested the possibility of conditionally returning to the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear issue. The other five countries should continue making efforts to bring North Korea to the table with the aim of making it abandon its nuclear program.

In his meeting with visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il indicated that the North is ready to hold multilateral talks after observing the results of U.S.-DPRK talks, adding that the Six-Party Talks are included in the multilateral talks.

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Since its nuclear test in May, North Korea has insisted that the Six-Party Talks are useless, saying, "They are gone forever," and "They only discuss sanctions." The North has also continued missile tests. It can be said that the North has slightly softened its stance.

The Obama administration has told the North that it would hold bilateral talks within the framework of the Six-Party Talks. The two countries are likely to hold bilateral talks shortly.

Kim Jong Il's statement reflects his shrewd calculation that if he can discuss the nuclear issue, a guarantee for his regime's preservation, and other matters only with the U.S., with luck he can ignore the existence of the Six-Party Talks. The U.S. must not play

into his hands.

The North's shift to dialogue is largely ascribable to the effectiveness of United Nations Security Council resolutions. Heavy restrictions on trade in materials connected with nuclear and missile development and a freeze on Pyongyang's assets overseas have dealt a serious blow to the North Korean economy.

China's position is delicate. This time around, China and North Korea have inked agreements in eight areas including economic and technological cooperation and tourism. Wen, who holds the No. 3 post in China, visited North Korea to make a personal appeal to Kim Jong Il to return to the Six-Party Talks. He needed to offer a quid pro quo in the form of economic aid.

China's promise to extend aid might end up weakening the effectiveness of the sanctions.

It is undeniable that over the last 15 years the U.S. and China have always tried to resolve problems arising from North Korea's repeated nuclear tests and missile launches. If this pattern takes hold, the Six-Party Talks might turn into a forum for simply rubber-stamping decisions of the U.S. and China.

North Korea's nuclear ambitions pose a threat to such countries as South Korea, Japan, and Russia. The five countries, including those three, are in accord on providing alternative energy aid and improving infrastructure [in the North] if the country proceeds to abandon its nuclear program. The Six-Party Talks are indispensable.

Joining the Six-Party Talks is also a shortcut for North Korea to obtain what it needs to reconstruct its economy.

Japan-China-South Korea summit talks will take place in Beijing on Oct. 10. Close cooperation is necessary to learn the outcome of the China-DPRK talks and to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table.

(5) Editorial: Disclosure of information on ASDF transport duty in Iraq; make SDF activities more transparent

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
October 7, 2009

The Defense Ministry has disclosed data detailing the Air Self-Defense Force's airlift support activities in Iraq. The ministry revealed the data in response to the plaintiff's demand for information disclosure in a lawsuit calling for a halt to the

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dispatch of the SDF to Iraq. During the Liberal Democratic Party's government, information about this matter was kept under wraps despite repeated similar requests. This development probably can be taken as one advantage brought about by the change of government.

The ASDF deployed three transport planes to Kuwait from which for four years and nine months, until December of last year, they flew missions to Iraq. The ASDF initially assisted the activities of Ground Self-Defense Force troops in southern Iraq. After the troops were withdrawn from Iraq, however, the ASDF flights were extended to Bagdad and the northern part of Iraq. The aircraft were also used to transport members of the United Nations and the multinational forces.

The disclosed data details the contents of airlift activities on a weekly basis. It records the amount of transported goods and numbers of persons, the nationalities, units, and ranks of transported military personnel, and even the types and numbers of accompanying small arms.

When the LDP was in power, the government emphasized that the dispatched planes were engaged in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. But the opposition camp suspected that the ASDF transport mission might be intended mainly to carry U.S. troops. The opposition camp also suspected that the ASDF's activities could constitute support for [the multinational forces'] combat

activities. The government, however, only presented the total numbers of goods and personnel transported and refused to disclose the details of ASDF activities, reasoning that [disclosing information] might undermine security.

According to the data disclosed this time, nearly 70% of the people transported by the planes were American military personnel. Many of them were carrying small arms or pistols. It might be necessary to verify whether or not the weapons or munitions were transported in violation of the Iraq Special Measures Law.

The Nagoya High Court ruled in April of last year that the ASDF's activities in Iraq are in violation of Article 9 of the Constitution because they might be involved in the multinational forces' combat activities.

Consideration naturally should be given to the safety of ASDF troops in Iraq. But it is improper to keep information on SDF troops' activities, particularly those of troops overseas, hidden from the public on the pretext of the troops' safety.

Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said: "The government should refrain from touching on secrets regarding national defense, but we decided to disclose the data because we found in talks with other countries' governments that doing so would have no adverse effect. We should share information with the people as much as possible." This is a reasonable statement, but the actual situation until now was quite different from what Kitazawa suggested.

The nontransparent policy management during the LDP administration, as represented by secret nuclear agreements between Japan and the U.S., resulted in strong public distrust of politics. We welcome the new administration's stance of prioritizing transparency in diplomatic and security areas.

The Diet should initially play the role of checking civilian control

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over the SDF. But this principle was not working properly under the 1955 political situation, because only limited information was provided to the Diet for the reason that such information is linked to military top secrets.

We hope that the new government will quickly improve the current situation. The government should provide the Diet with necessary information in a positive manner and establish a system to enable politicians to scrutinize [SDF activities].

(6) "Seiron" column: How to ensure the "deepening" of the Japan-U.S. alliance

SANKEI (Page 7) (Full)
October 7, 2009

Jun Sakurada, associate professor at Toyo Gakuen University

Key to trustworthiness of the "cornerstone"

The new prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, reportedly "confirmed the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance" with U.S. President Barack H. Obama during his recent visit to the United States. However, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has so far sent out numerous messages that could be interpreted as a lack of enthusiasm about "deepening" the bilateral alliance relationship, at least up until the recent change of administration.

For instance, according to a Bloomberg News report on September 11, House of Representatives member Tsuyoshi Yamaguchi (then senior vice minister of defense in the DPJ's "Next Cabinet") termed the missile defense system deployed under the Liberal Democratic Party cabinet as "useless" and indicated that the Hatoyama cabinet should consider cutting the budget for missile defense from FY2010.

Concerns about the Japan-U.S. relationship have been solely due to the article written by Prime Minister Hatoyama that appeared in The New York Times.

In light of events even before that, the Hatoyama cabinet's rhetoric on the Japan-U.S. alliance as the cornerstone [of its foreign policy] will not be able to win the United States' trust. Advocacy of the "deepening" of the bilateral alliance not backed by concrete policy measures may, on the contrary, accelerate the "hollowing out" of the alliance.

Start with discussions about emergencies

To be sure, the Hatoyama cabinet is giving consideration to cooperating on the prevention of global warming and nuclear proliferation as a specific policy for "deepening" the alliance with the U.S. However, even though the prevention of global warming and nuclear proliferation is important in the context of Japan's future foreign policy and working on these issues is indeed a worthy cause, discussions on this do not necessarily have to be with the U.S. alone. The discussions that Japan needs to have with the U.S. as an ally should be about policy issues that it can only talk about with the U.S.

Essentially, the discussion should be about "emergencies." The reason the Japan-U.S. relationship constitutes an alliance is based on the understanding that Japan and the U.S. will jointly deal with

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issues relating to "emergencies" in Japan and in areas close to Japan. However, due to the various constraints on its security policy, including those arising from the provisions of the Constitution on the exercise of the right of collective self-defense and other matters, Japan has been unable to fulfill its obligations under the Japan-U.S. alliance as an equal partner. As long as Japan does not deal with such constraints, it cannot possibly be an "equal ally to the U.S." in the real sense.

Therefore, precisely because of its awareness of the inequality under the bilateral alliance, Japan needs to continue to make conscious efforts to make up for such inequality.

The refueling mission in the Indian Ocean and the handling of U.S. Forces Japan realignment are linked to such efforts. In that sense, the prevention of global warming and nuclear proliferation is not a decisive factor for promoting the "deepening" of the alliance.

Most importantly, the Japan-U.S. alliance is also a guarantee for Japan that the U.S. will not become an "enemy" again. The mistake that Japan made in the war against the U.S. more than 60 years ago was not the fact that it "went to war" - as most pacifists would claim - but that it "fought against a country that it should not have made an enemy of."

For this reason, Professor Yonosuke Nagai (a political scientist) harshly criticized the pacifists of the past who cried out anti-war and anti-American slogans at the height of the Vietnam War, conveniently reassured by the tacit assumption that "the U.S. would never abandon Japan."

How to make continuous efforts

However, now that the Hatoyama cabinet has been launched, if the attitude of aiming to "deepen" the Japan-U.S. alliance without making any substantial efforts, based on the almost unconscious assumption that the Japan-U.S. alliance will never break down - similar to the pacifists in the past - is perceived prominently as the "will of the Japanese government," it will cause tremendous damage to the future of Japan's.

On the other hand, the attitude of ridiculing the advocacy of a substantial "deepening" of the bilateral alliance as "subservience to the U.S." by both political leftists and rightists is also an extension of what might be called the irresponsibility of pacifists in the past.

The report of the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities, based on discussions in the government under the previous Aso cabinet, has recommended allowing the exercise of the right of

collective self-defense, the relaxation of the three principles on arms exports, possessing the capability to strike at enemy bases, and a review of the five principles on participation in UN peacekeeping operations. Like other policy issues, the Hatoyama cabinet will probably shelve these recommendations.

However, if the Hatoyama cabinet implements even one or two of the recommendations, this will be a solid step toward ensuring "equality" in the Japan-U.S. alliance and promoting the "deepening" of this alliance. This author hopes that Prime Minister Hatoyama will do so, but will he be able to "change tack" in order to accomplish this?

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(7) "Seiron" column: "Self-contradiction" in Hatoyama's yuai diplomacy

SANKEI (Page 7) (Full)
October 9, 2009

Atsuyuki Sassa, first director of Cabinet Security Affairs Office

Incoherent policies due to the Social Democratic Party line

Hatoyama's "yuai [fraternal] diplomacy" has begun with his security and foreign policies, the very foundation of national policy, left undefined. These were kicked off with hasty visits to the U.S. by the idealist Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, suspected of being anti-U.S., and the dogmatic Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada. This author is certainly not the only one worried that Japan-U.S. relations may deteriorate.

The Hatoyama cabinet is the oddest in the history of Japan's constitutional government. While the voters gave the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) 308 seats in the House of Representatives, and the administration enjoyed a support rating of 75 percent at its inauguration, over 70 percent of the voters feel "insecure" about the government they elected. The reason is the ambiguity of the DPJ's security and foreign policies. The DPJ's bible, its manifesto for the recent election, says nothing specific about how to defend Japan against missiles launched by North Korea.

Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa has made prominent statements on the supremacy of the United Nations. The DPJ has also concluded a coalition agreement with the SDP, which takes an entirely different direction in security issues, and appointed its leader, Mizuho Fukushima, to the cabinet, resulting in total incoherence in its security and foreign policies.

From the perspective of a two-party system, taking the SDP into the administration as a coalition partner was a serious mistake. In light of the pathetic situation of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) after its crushing defeat in the election, the people have no choice but to hope the DPJ will toe a pragmatic line in security and foreign affairs. It is obvious to everyone that Japan cannot respond to threats from the unpredictable North Korea with "yuai" and "child allowances." The DPJ has serious responsibilities. Formulating security and foreign policies acceptable to the people is an urgent task for the party.

Impossible without security treaty revision

Prime Minister Hatoyama has patted himself on the back and claimed he was "able to build a Yukio-Barack relationship of trust," on the model of the "Ron-Yasu" relationship between former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and President Ronald Reagan, and that "there was a warm atmosphere" during his first visit to the United States. However, if I may say so, I would opine that this was the result of the deferring of all controversial issues by Japan hands such as Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell in their attempt to showcase friendship, in order to hold in place the American "protectorate" of Japan that had shown signs of defecting. It must be remembered that the Japan-U.S. security treaty is not a mere treaty of friendship and goodwill but a military alliance.

When Prime Minister Hatoyama announced his goal of seeking a "close and equal Japan-U.S. relationship," I was hopeful, because the DPJ had achieved a bloodless revolution through legal means--truly a "Heisei Restoration," which both the LDP and leftist forces had failed to accomplish. Bold political and administrative reforms to correct the deeply entrenched problems of many, many years have already started. Therefore, I had hoped that the U.S. "protectorate" would be rehabilitated to become a sovereign country with equal status as the U.S. in security and foreign policies.

Toward this end, the interpretation of the "right of collective self-defense" by the Cabinet Legislation Bureau requires amendment, Article 5 of the security treaty needs revising to make the bilateral alliance both defensive and offensive, and host-nation support, without parallel in the world, including the provision of military bases and the "sympathy budget," under Article 6, needs to be reduced. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) is merely an appendix to the security treaty, so the revision of SOFA will not make the bilateral relationship equal. Militarily, Japan is indeed a U.S. "protectorate," so unless the security treaty itself is revised, the treaty and an equal Japan-U.S. relationship are two irreconcilable, contradictory concepts.

Doing nothing about the "sympathy budget," amounting to 200 billion yen, that is not a treaty obligation and shouldering the financial burden of 600 billion yen for the relocation of U.S. marines in Okinawa to Guam were indeed serious omissions by the LDP. Yet Japan will now have to continue to accept the provision of bases in Okinawa and pay the "sympathy budget" as national obligations under the security treaty because Prime Minister Hatoyama has made a commitment to President Obama to retain Articles 5 and 6 as they are.

Extreme arbitrariness impermissible

The next issue is the "nuclear umbrella." The essence of the security treaty is the United States' nuclear deterrence. The Obama-(Hillary) Clinton administration, which initiated the UN resolution on a "world without nuclear weapons," has been in power for nine months. Prime Minister Hatoyama should have demanded a clear commitment to the "nuclear umbrella" from President Obama at the summit meeting. Not only did he fail to do so, he has even abandoned the "nuclearization card," an option for achieving an equal relationship, emphasized the three non-nuclear principles, and ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to investigate the secret nuclear accord.

A security treaty without nuclear weapons is meaningless. We hope that the Yukio-Barack relationship does not turn out to be a fleeting moment of camaraderie between two idealists with similar mindsets.

Proposing the concept of East Asian Community to China during the U.S. visit is also a problem. This will benefit China's pursuit of hegemony and may expose Japan to the risk of becoming a vassal state of China, as well as arouse suspicions in the Western countries, particularly the United States.

Collaboration between China, a nuclear-armed military dictatorship, and Japan, an economic and technological power, may give rise to unnecessary suspicions among the Western countries.

Lastly, although Prime Minister Hatoyama is calling for cooperation among countries based on his grandfather's words yuai, things are not so simple in the global arena. The international commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent was also abrupt and reckless. This is a commitment that will affect Japan's economic growth and impose an additional cost on the people. Therefore, a national consensus is required. Public opinion polls have shown the DPJ's landslide victory was mainly the result of "dislike of the

LDP" (58 percent). Only 10 percent of respondents cited the DPJ manifesto as a reason for voting for the party, and merely 2 percent cited Prime Minister Hatoyama as the reason. The people have not given Prime Minister Hatoyama a mandate to act with extreme arbitrariness.

(8) Will honeymoon-like relationship between Rengo and DPJ continue?

ASAHI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
October 9, 2009

The Japanese Trade Union Confederation (Rengo), the central organization of trade unions, marked the 20th anniversary since its formation. Representatives of the three ruling parties, including Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, attended its regular conference held in Tokyo on Oct. 8. Rengo played up its honeymoon-like relationship with the new administration. It is expected to work together with the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) for the Upper House election next year. However, it is not completely in agreement with the DPJ on the policy front. It is finding it difficult to maintain a proper distance from the administration.

DPJ attaches importance to its relationship with Rengo for its organizational power: Ozawa asks for cooperation for Upper House election next year

The new Hatoyama administration is clearly attaching importance to Rengo. On Sept. 17, the day after the launch of the administration, Hatoyama invited Chairman Takagi and others to the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) as the first guests. On that occasion, Takagi made a request, "Since we have a policy agreement, we would like to discuss various things properly." Even when he was visiting Pittsburgh, U.S.A, to attend the financial summit (G-20), Hatoyama contacted Takagi, who was also visiting the U.S. to attend the labor summit.

Among cabinet members, there are many lawmakers who are backed by labor unions, including Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano, State Minister for Administrative Reform Council Yoshito Sengoku, Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Minister Tatsuo Kawabata and Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Masayuki Naoshima. Tadayoshi Kusano, a former Rengo member, has also been picked as a member of the Administrative Reform Council, the showcase of the cabinet. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has even criticized this situation, with one part member saying, "Labor unions are ruling the cabinet."

The relationship between the DPJ and Rengo cooled down briefly in 2005, when then DPJ president Seiji Maehara advocated a policy of shedding the party's dependence on labor unions. However, when Ichiro Ozawa took office as president in April 2006, the situation changed completely. Having an eye on Rengo's organizational power, Ozawa asked Takagi to visit various parts of the country with him.

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They then traveled all over the country in the run-up to the Upper House election in 2007.

The DPJ won a crushing victory in the Upper House election with Rengo offering manpower to make up for the weakness of DPJ's local organizations. Rengo offered full support to the DPJ for the general election this summer. The election of 38 candidates backed by trade unions contributed to the DPJ's landslide victory.

Chief of the secretariat Nobuaki Koga will replace Takagi Rengo's regular conference on the 9th. Koga hails from the Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. (now Panasonic). He has been associating with Hirano, who also hails from the same trade union, for 30 years. The Hirano-Koga Panasonic line will replace the Ozawa-Takagi line.

Ozawa, who is spearheading the DPJ in preparing for the Upper House election next summer, has already started taking action in an effort to use Rengo once again to the utmost extent.

Rengo: Coordinating gaps in policies is problem

Many representatives of industrial unions at the Rengo regular conference voiced concern about the DPJ's policy of reforming the public servant system or making highways toll free.

Members of labor unions under Rengo even goaded the leadership with one saying, "Rengo is the largest support organization of the ruling power. We want you to stick to the stance of saying whatever we have to say."

Looking back on the 20-year history of Rengo, Chairman Takagi noted, "Our organization has not necessarily made smooth progress. We are still half way."

The power transfer is an opportunity for Rengo to go on the offensive, changing the trend. The lineup for that has been set with Deputy Prime Minister Naoto Kan, with whom Rengo has been working since the party was an opposition party, having been put in charge of employment, and Ritsuo Hosokawa, who has the full support of a trade union under the wing of Rengo, taking office as senior Vice Health, Labor and Welfare Minister. Since the launch of the new administration, Rengo has been strongly calling on the government to strengthen employment measures. As a result, preparation for emergency employment measures has gotten under way.

However, Rengo is not necessarily in agreement with the DPJ on all individual policies. How should it deal with policies that are linked to the interests of trade unions under its wing? For instance, there are issues intertwined with the Japan Pension Organization to be launched in January next year. That is because Social Insurance Agency officials could lose their jobs as the new organization is launched.

When Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Nagatsuma along with the senior vice ministers and the parliamentary secretaries made a courtesy call on Rengo, Chief of Secretariat Koga cautioned them, "Please make a cautious response."

How will Rengo realize their policies, while keeping a proper distance from the ruling party without being unilaterally influenced by it? The campaign guidelines adopted at the regular conference included this description: "Rengo will hold policy talks with

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political parties if the need arises, regardless of whether it is the ruling camp or the opposition camp, which can be taken as insurance, so to speak, as well as a policy of strengthening ties with the DPJ.

ZUMWALT